THE BLAST

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IF HE ONLY WOULD—

RESISTANCE TO OPPRESSION

LABOR, organized as well as unorganized, owes a debt to those within its ranks who have had the daring to resist the master class in defense of the working class.

It is tragic to see labor leaders and their editors repudiating the McNamaras, Ford and Suhr, Quinlan, Schmidt or Joe Hill on the plea that Organized Labor cannot "afford to encourage violence."

It is this cringing slave philosophy, this repudiation of the fighting spirit of Labor, which has given the employing class almost unlimited opportunity for violence by proxy; that is, through hired gunmen, police, the courts and similar agencies.

Ford and Suhr gave life and impetus to the California Commission on Housing and Immigration, and the Federal Commission on Industrial Relations was virtually created as a result of the McNamaras' war.

The report of the latter Commission contains a radical analysis of industrial conditions, the import of which Labor has not as yet fully digested.

From Chapter VIII we quote as follows:

"The general effect of the decisions of American courts, however, has been to restrict the activities of labor organizations and deprive them of their most effective weapons, namely, the boycott and the power of picketing, while on the other hand the weapons of employers, namely, the power of arbitrary discharge, of blacklisting, and of bringing in strikebreakers, have been maintained and legislative attempts to restrict the employers' powers have generally been declared unconstitutional by the courts. Furthermore, an additional weapon has been placed in the hands of the employers by many courts in the form of sweeping injunctions, which render punishable acts which would otherwise be legal, and also result in effect in depriving the workers of the right to jury trial."

After expressing grave doubts as to the efficacy of the Clayton Act, the report declares all efforts to restrict the rights and powers of the employers to correspond in substance with those allowed trade unions, have failed absolutely—not only on account of the intervention of the courts, but on account of the ineffectiveness of legislation against blacklisting and arbitrary discharge.

As Labor admittedly has all the worst of the law, and no possible redress through it, why in the name of common sense should Labor be law-abiding? On the subject of violence we quote from the Industrial Relations Commission report: "Violence is seldom, if ever, spontaneous, but arises from a conviction that fundamental rights are denied and that peaceful methods of adjustment cannot be used. * * * The arbitrary suppression of violence by force produces only resentment which will rekindle into greater violence when opportunity offers. Violence can be prevented only by *removing the cause of violence;* industrial peace can rest only upon industrial justice. * * * Throughout history where a people or a group have been arbitrarily denied rights which they conceived to be theirs, reaction has been inevitable."

"Violence is a natural form of protest against injustice."

"No strike can be won if the employer can operate his plant without difficulty."

"When governmental institutions are thus corrupted and used as instruments of oppression, men can only resist with such power as they have, not alone for the protection of themselves and their families but for the preservation of the fundamental rights of themselves and their fellow citizens."

The peaceable and orderly progress of civilization is a social myth. It was invented thousands of years ago by masters who had found that fooling the slaves involved less personal risk and strenuous effort than the application of the lash.

As faithfulness to the master class and conspicuous ability to subdue rebellious sentiment was the only condition upon which a slave overseer might be released from his own bondage in ancient times, so it is now.

The climbers within the ranks of Labor, provided the masters think them safe, sane and conservative, emancipate themselves from toil and generally graduate into political jobs. To them Labor is not Vision—it is a living.

CAN YOU PROVE IT?

WE radicals are constantly being accused of making assertions without proof. For instance, if you should declare, with Dr. Chapman, that "Government is an organized system of exploitation within a given territory," you would instantly be challenged to prove your statement. "For *this* government is conceived in liberty," the infatuated patriot will say. Yet, in spite of that, you can prove your definition true even for this country. Or, rather, a university professor has already done it for you. Merely say: "Allow me to suggest, my friend, that you read a book by the eminent Prof. Charles A. Beard, of Columbia University, called 'An Economic Interpretation of the United States Constitution.' You will then be convinced that the 'fathers of the Constitution' established it mainly so that they themselves and others of similar interests could speculate in government securities, could collect high rates of interest from hard-working farmers, could gain fortunes by buying up Western lands which the work of other men would make valuable, and could exploit men and women in manufactures and commerce."

The same plan used to form a government in the interests of the moneyed class is being worked right now in their efforts to transform the school system of this country. Until within the last ten years little organized effort has been made to capture the schools. Locally, it is true, the "substantial citizens" were elected to serve on school boards

and thus influenced the selection of teachers and, to a certain extent, the conduct of the schools. But the capitalists themselves were not well organized then; hence did not exercise this power effectively.

Now the situation has changed. Even a casual reader of the newspapers knows that something is happening to the schools. The masters are organized, and are out to capture the schools of this country. As I said before, the same general plan is used for this onslaught against liberty that the venerated fathers employed in framing the constitution which has so well served their class. One trivial example will illustrate, as a full explanation is not within the scope of this article.

"The national movement for the development of thrift was started by the American Society for the Development of Thrift, of which F. W. Strauss, banker, of Chicago, is the president and financial backer. The plan of the movement is to inculcate thrift in the American people. This organization was started about four years ago. It was through the influence of the Society of Thrift that the National Educational Association got behind the movement. The members of the committee appointed at Oakland, where the N. E. A. met last summer, are each to take up different phases of the subject, and will report at a gathering at Detroit, February 22, 1916. This will be held in conjunction with the National School Superintendents' convention at that time."

Among the subjects to be treated are the following: The Thrift Movement and Its Relation to Rural Life; Its Relation to Banking, Accounting, School Savings Banks and Similar Institutions; Relation to the Industries; Its Relation to Men's Organizations, such as Commercial Clubs and Labor Unions; Relation to Educational Movements. One means of arousing interest in thrift is the offering of attractive prizes in the national essay contest on thrift. The adult contest is open to all, and a first prize of $750, a second of $250 and a third of $100 is offered. In the school children's contest, $350 is offered in prizes.

Here, clearly outlined in a newspaper report, are the successive moves by which the bankers are trying to get their grip on the schools. Note: One man, a banker, organizes a local group; then makes it national. This body then sends representatives to the National Educational Association at its annual convention. There they gain a body of principals and superintendents to present their plans to a gathering of superintendents the following February. These worthy gentlemen, the autocrats of the school system, are ready listeners to bankers, manufacturers and all big business men. Have you ever noticed how royally these ruling schoolmen are wined and dined by commercial clubs, merchants' and manufacturers' associations, and their like, during all school conventions? Then they go home full of the advice they have received from their entertainers, call a meeting of their principals, and repeat the same to them. These, in turn, pass it on to the teachers under them, who have no choice but to carry it out on the children, whose habits and lives are thus shaped for them.

We sometimes speak of legislation as though it is the molding force in the community, and as though it is instigated by the people concerned, through their representatives. Here is legislation more vital than any lawmaking body ever enacted. It is originated in a banker's brain, passes on from the top of the school system down to the children, almost without sanction or approval from either the teachers, the pupils, or the parents themselves—if they will allow it.

But, you may say, it is good for little children to learn to save. That may or may not be so. But should the whole tremendous psychological force of the school system be brought to bear upon the child to teach him to save, for the reason that a banker in Chicago conceives it is healthy for the future banks to have a generation of savers? or because employers of all kinds realize that to reduce the standard of living in this country means an opportunity to hold down wages?

What have the parents to say?

Who rules our Schools?

AN UNDESIRABLE TEACHER.

MEXICO

Selig Schulberg

ALL wars of modern times have had their inception in commercial rivalry. The Mexican war was and is no exception to the rule. The Pearson Syndicate, an oil concern, a rival of the Standard Oil Company, had all the Governmental favors under President Diaz. When Madero challenged the Diaz administration, he did it with the support of the Standard Oil Company.

In the *Congressional Record* of the Sixty-third Congress will be found quotations read from the record by a Senator from Michigan with regard to the subject. It appears that at the outbreak of the Mexican revolution, headed by Francisco I. Madero, against President Diaz, the Eagle Oil Company, which includes the Aguila Oil Company, dealing in the refined products of oil, and the Pearson oil concessions, belonging to Lord Cowdray of England, producing crude oil, were doing their business in sharp rivalry with the Waters-Pierce Oil Company, a Missouri corporation operating in Mexico. The controlling interest and the stock of the Waters-Pierce Oil Company was owned by the Standard Oil Company.

The Rockefellers made the Mexican situation, and have fostered it. They have hired their Otises and Hearsts to bark for war, and all of the murder, rapine and sorrow can be placed at their door. If now they force intervention, the Standard Oil Company of America should be held responsible for every boy sacrificed on the altar of their greed.

While the Standard Oil Company is putting on a solemn face and dishing out a few dimes to the starving of Belgium, it is at the same time manipulating things to enhance the value of its vast holdings of oil and mineral lands.

Toilers of America, if the Hearsts, Otises and Rockefellers have property, for which they want protection, in Mexico, let *them* protect it!

THE BLAST

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COMMENTS

Labor Intervention

THE jingo press, inspired by Big Business interests, is howling for intervention in Mexico. The excuse offered is the recent killing of a score of Americans.

Statistics for the year just past show that during 1915 no less that 22,565 working men were killed in the factories of the *United States* (not in the Mexican Revolution), mostly by preventable accidents. This number does not include the many workers shot down in strikes and the thousands starved to death and driven to suicide in the orderly process of our peaceful civilization.

We haven't noticed any capitalistic papers calling for intervention in behalf of Labor to stop this Murder by Greed. Why should they? It is the source of their masters' profits. It is a safe bet that there will be no intervention in this until the workers take the matter into their own hands.

* * *

There's a Reason

SOME people think it rather strange that the preparationists are so strenuously opposing the proposal that the government manufacture its own munitions.

It isn't a bit strange. What's the use of advocating Preparedness if there are to be no profits in it for the big armament manufacturers?

* * *

The Balance of Power

FRANKLY, we prefer Kill-'em-all Teddy to the timid apologists for Preparedness for "adequate defense."

We would rather be told by a ruffian in the plainest Anglo Saxon to go to hell than to be unsuspectingly shoved down the stairs by the soft-gloved hands of a Judas.

The militarists of the Roosevelt type make no foul excuses. They want conscription and universal military service in order to be ready for the bloody struggle which they are determined to precipitate.

But the lady-like preparationists hide themselves behind "adequate defense," though every school boy knows that "adequateness" means keeping step with the almost unlimited and ever-increasing armaments of the great European powers. It means turning this country into a vast military camp like Russia or Germany.

But neither the blood-thirsty militarist nor the hypocritical preparationist is really dangerous. They will do nothing but shout.

The real danger is in Labor. What will Labor do? That is the *only* important question. The issue is in the hands of the workers, in theirs alone. They are the real power that will ultimately decide. Without them, not a wheel can be turned, not a bullet cast.

It's up to you, workers.

* * *

If He Only Would

DO you see the cartoon on our first page? Well, that's what you *could* do, if you only would.

You could make your bloodsuckers see stars, make them feel closer to heaven or hell than they ever dreamed of being in this life.

You could knock the stuffin' out of them, literally and figuratively. You could squeeze the very breath out of Capitalism, squeeze it out so hard that it should never come to again.

You *could* do it—aye, so easily, for "you are many, they are few," and the power of life and food is all in *your* hands. You could do it with one hand, with only your Left, while your Right would be free to create and to build, and to re-shape Life nearer to your heart's desire, for the well-being of all.

Well, why don't you? You have the power. You need only *to will.*

* * *

The Myth of Peace

THE Fords, the Bryans, the Jane Addams may be quite sincere. If so, they are blind leaders of the blind.

All their talk about international peace is an impossible dream as long as capitalism lasts.

The first requisite for International peace is National peace. National peace can not exist where there is no industrial peace. And there will be no industrial peace until the industrious man enjoys the fruit of his industry.

THE BLAST does not stand for "peace at any price." It is in favor of war—war to the bitter end of the combined workers of the world against their despoilers.

* * *

Sancta Simplicitas

THE Trades and Labor Assembly of Minneapolis, Minn., has evidently been encouraged by the action of the British Railway and Mine men in their determined stand against conscription.

The Minneapolis Assembly passed a resolution demanding the seizure of the property of the rich in the event of war to balance the sacrifice of workers' lives.

Splendid! we thought as we read the news. The brave example of the British workers is bearing good fruit.

With much joy we read the Resolutions of the Labor Assembly, till we reached the last passage, and then—then we realized the difference between the British toiler and the American Sovereign of Labor.

What did the British Railway and Mine men do? They threatened a general strike and forced the government to back down.

And the Minneapolis Trade and Labor Assembly? They "resolved that copies of their resolution be sent to the Union League Club, to Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson *for their endorsement.*"

Can you beat it?

The Necessity of Resistance

THE Executive Council of the A. F. of L. has issued a circular to all unions calling on the organized workers to contribute the wages of an hour's labor for the benefit of the Danbury Hatters.

It will be recalled that the long struggle of the Hatters' Union of Danbury, Conn., against the Anti-Boycott Association and the hat manufacturers, resulted in the courts fining the union $300,000. The bank deposits and homes of the hatters have now been attached to insure payment of the award.

January 27th has been selected as the date on which the workers should contribute an hour's wages to save the Hatters from their plight. There is no doubt that Labor will respond with funds. It always does in such matters, and to that extent it evidences a generous spirit of solidarity.

But we make bold to ask, "Why pay the award?" According to the circular of the Executive Council of the A. F. of L., the Danbury Hatters are *victims of greed and injustice.*

Do free and independent men meekly submit to greed and injustice? Are these the descendants of Patrick Henry who demanded "Give me liberty, or give me death!"?

Submission means increased and ever-increasing oppression and injustice. To hell with paying the awards of greed. If the Danbury Hatters have a spark of Patrick Henry's spirit, let them *resist the attachment* of their homes and let the two-million-headed American Federation of Labor prove its real solidarity by backing up the action of the victimized Hatters.

* * *

Labor Mollusks

LABOR leaders and almost every labor and "radical" publication have been straining hard to explain away the Youngstown riot. The strikers—they feverishly assure us—had no part in it. It was "outsiders," hired thugs from Pittsburgh, agents of Germany, visitors from the Moon, perhaps, but the workers—never!

Why all these protestations, gentlemen? Have the slaves of Youngstown not suffered enough to break out into a riot? Were they not oppressed and tyrannized over beyond the limit of even a slave's endurance? And when the mill guards shot into the defenseless strikers, wantonly killing several men, would you still have their fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters look on meekly and bow their backs in cowardly submission?

Verily, ye apologists for labor violence, ye are slimy mollusks. A man who had nothing to "defend," but who has backbone—Frank P. Walsh—had this to say in his report: *"Violence is a natural form of protest against injustice."*

A Labor Issue

SOME people—well meaning and otherwise—have advised us to ignore Religion and Church and deal only with Labor matters. We also notice that our friend Caroline Nelson, in her article in this issue, says in effect that people now-a-days do not fear the Church any more.

It's a grave mistake. Present-day wage slavery, like all slavery, is *not* the result of capitalism. The reverse is true. Capitalism is the result, not the cause. Capitalism could not continue another fortnight if the workers refused to support it.

The Church with its hoary superstitions is one of the great factors that keep the workers in obedience and submission.

Throughout history the priest—of all denominations—has always sided with King and Master. He has kept the eyes of the people riveted upon "heavenly things" while the exploiters were despoiling them of their earthly possessions.

The Church is the handmaiden of all Tyranny and Oppression.

* * *

This Is the Life

"LABOR is Life, not Vision," triumphantly concludes the editor of *Organized Labor,* after having editorially kicked the "dreamers and visionaries" off the map.

What a brilliant grasp of the situation, what profundity of thought!

The limits of our little Earth are all too inadequate for our editor to prove his erudite conclusion. He had to go outside of the earth, beyond the confines of this sphere, clear out into the Universe for an analogy of Labor's role in the scheme of things.

Says he: "Unyielding and irrevocable as the law of gravitation and the forces and powers which hold the planets and the stars and the orbits of the heavens immovable on their motion through the Universe."

Again, "The forces of the great Cosmos, which comprise the Universe, are always at work, gently, along the lines of least resistance towards the goal of their infinite, ultimate destiny."

The wind and the storm, the thunder and lightning, nature's ravages on land and sea, the death-dealing blizzard, cyclone and earthquake—do these not prove that Nature is at work—as the editor so truly remarks—*"gently,* along the lines of least resistance"?

His difficult premise thus proven, he proudly concludes, "Labor is life, not vision."

Can it be a typographical error? Didn't he mean, Labor is *a living?* For, in spite of all his rhetorical excursions into the Cosmos, his vision and aspirations for Labor must indeed be limited if he is satisfied to regard the miserable, degrading existence of the toilers as Life.

PREPAREDNESS IS HELL

L. E. Claypool

THE man who advocates "Preparedness" has no right to denounce a man who carries a gun in a peaceful community. A nation is nothing but an aggregation of human beings. The traits and propensities peculiar to a nation are the same as those peculiar to the constituent citizenry.

The excuse offered by the Militarists—for that is all these preparedness parties are—for large army and navy appropriations is that the other nations are armed, ready to fight. Very well; we have in this city perhaps 3,000 belligerent gents who secretly carry guns. They are armed, ready to fight. This being true, why may not you or I carry concealed weapons, that we may be prepared for these gents in the event they threaten us? O, the law will not let us. Who is this law, that can do something which the people who gave it existence cannot do? If the law won't let us carry guns, why does it let them?

I never carried a gun in my life, and I never expect to. For twenty-eight years nobody has threatened my life. I am not "prepared," and yet I do not worry about the gunmen of the city. I do not worry for the simple reason that I don't give the gunmen any incentive to gun me. I insist that if the United States would quit doing things to other nations to make them want to fight, said United States would never have to fight. Take our Monroe Doctrine. It is an obsolete prohibition. It is silly for this country, when it can't take care of its own internal injustices, to issue notice to the world that it will not tolerate colonization in South America. South America is able to take care of herself. And where do we get the right, anyhow, to say this or that piece of land shall not be settled upon, when the land lies outside our own jurisdiction? We ought to let South America alone. She resents our attitude, and just to show that she does she buys nearly all her goods from Europe when it would be even cheaper to get them here. She does it because our capitalists and officials have been so arrogant and patronizing.

We will not let other nations outrage South America, but we do not hesitate to do it ourselves. Take Columbia. I'll bet there are not ten men in this city who know the truth about our relations with this benighted southern republic. If they do know it, their patriotism or their shame keeps them from admitting the knowledge. Well, the truth is that we stole the country called Panama from Columbia and built a canal through it. To be sure we stole it legitimately, just like a monopolist steals money, or some of our big real estate men steal land. But we stole it just the same. We did it by inciting sedition in Panama and making the inhabitants believe they were imposed on by Columbia. Says the U. S.: "Panama, strike for your liberty; we will back you." Glittering inducements were offered to Panama, and she seceded. The U. S. fleet stood lazily nearby for the purpose of putting the fear of God in the hearts of the Columbians, whose navy consisted of three rowboats, and whose army is smaller than the police force of New York City. Some of our latter day diplomats have had trouble with their consciences, and the United States recently apologized to Columbia and gave her $25,000,000. You may have noticed, though, that we did not give Panama back to Columbia. It is just as if I would come and steal a cow from you and then give you $1.50 twenty-five years after I stole the cow and beg your pardon. This Panama cow has given birth to a billion dollars calf in the meantime.

In our dealings with Mexico we have done little better. In 1845 we stole a piece of territory from Mexico as big as the State of Missouri. Any historian who is proficient in his profession will admit this. At the time the Department of State tried to salve it over with the conscientious folks of the country by calling it "Manifest Destiny." Up to the time Huerta became president of Mexico we had robbed Mexico of an average of $150,000,000 a year. Go to the local stockholders in the Lucky Tiger mine. Go to the owners of the Orient Railroad. Go to the Archbold (Rockefeller) oil and sulphur interests, and ask how much they paid the Mexican Government for the right to exploit —rather for the privileges of exploiting. Ask them how much they paid Mexican labor. Ask them how much they exacted from the various Mexican State Governments as the price of those improvements the Americans promised to make but never made? Just ask them and see what they say.

In this city lives a man who spent years in Mexico hiring peons. He hired them as do all Americans. Two dozen or so peons are engaged to work at a small sum daily. They are hired while they are under the influence of the most vicious intoxicant known. It is made by distilling the juice of the century plant. In this state of mind the poor Indian will agree to anything. He is given some money to work in advance, and then must work until he pays that back, for under the laws of Mexico a laborer can't quit as long as he is in debt to the employer. By keeping them constantly in debt the Americans make slaves out of the peons; hence—peonage.

All this is not said for the mere novelty of running down America. This is a good country, but it has been in the hands of bad managers. The people have not been to blame. It has been the bodymasters of the nation. From the time we began to violate treaties made with the Indians up to the time we stole the Philippines from Spain, the managers of the Government have gyped and gouged. You can't gyp and gouge without making enemies. Enemies will seek revenge. I don't know but what they are entitled to it. But a country that behaves itself has no worries. Sweden and Holland are not prepared when compared with Germany and France. Yet they are not being molested. Ah, but you say, "What about Belgium?" After all of your other arguments have failed you shout, "What about Belgium?"

Most of you gents that yell never heard of Belgium until this war broke out. A lot of you probably don't know yet that the language of the Belgians is French. Further, you don't know that Belgium had a treaty with England and France which placed the little nation in the war before the German invasion. You may not know that French and English engineers and military experts had surveyed the land and were preparing to make it a battle ground long before Germany actually did so. It is too bad that innocent Belgians were killed. It is an outrage. But it is as much the fault of the rulers of Belgium as it is of the rulers of Germany. Belgium was "prepared," from a military standpoint, and she is paying the price today. Sweden and Holland are not "prepared," and are peaceful.

To be prepared means that you are ready to fight. It means that you expect a fight. And nothing in the history of the world was ever gained by a fight except honor and bruises, and neither one is worth a damn. The element that wants preparedness is the silk stocking gang. They do not expect to do any fighting themselves—war or no war—but they do expect the sucker to do it in order that they of the silken hosiery may linger languorously amid their present luxuries.

—*The Hammer.*

A LETTER FROM TOM MANN

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND, January 4, 1916.

Dear Friend Aleck:

I am much interested in your bringing out a new weekly. I certainly think there is room for it, and a fine chance for educational work; and you are wise not to be tied to any "ism." I only received your letter yesterday, and hasten to send a few words of congratulation and encouragement. I feel sure you have well gauged the mental attitude of the people of the U. S. A., in your exceptional activities of the last two years; and you should be equal to commanding the co-operation of fellow workers in the Labor movement.

As you are aware, I lay especial stress upon the Industrial Organization. The longer I live, and the more experience I get, the greater importance I attach to organization. Of course I know how reactionary some organizations are, and how sadly the best of them need a proper appreciation of the Ideal; but I can recall no effort that has been put forth within my experience, no matter how self-sacrificing it may have been, or lofty in aim and aspiration that has really benefited the worker in any direct way except through the agency of organization.

So if I may venture to say so, I hope THE BLAST will stand definitely for industrial organization, for each and every section of the workers; and while advocating the highest ideals, will always favor the practical application of the principle of betterment, and do something of value in raising the standard of life of the workers by hand and brain.

Here in England, in the eighteenth month of the war, the changing psychology of the workers is in a plastic condition. Special efforts are being made to enroll in the army all of a military age; already there are four and a half millions in the British army, and over two millions on munition work, and in connection with the efforts of the conscriptionists and the opponents thereto, there is many a lively tussle taking place. Many workmen are under the impression that it is the intention of the conscriptionists to apply the compulsory principle to the industrial workers, and therefore they are very hostile. In this connection comes along the right relationship of the workers, individually and collectively, to the State, and especially as regards what shall be attempted after the war.

It is not easy to learn with correctness what is going on in the workers' ranks in Germany, but having regard for the large percentage which undoubtedly desired to see drastic social and economic changes before the war, it must surely be the case that most of them or all of them equally desire such change brought about as speedily as possible. Europe is certainly in the melting pot, and what will be the outcome is difficult to forecast, but I fail to see any force in the arguments of those who contend that the United States ought to take part in the war.

Russia alone could provide another fifteen million soldiers, as far as man power goes, if necessary. As regards the fleet, the combined navies of the Allies are on such a scale that another dozen or so of battleships is of little account.

I am not disposed to attempt a discussion of what might happen if America sided with Germany, Austria and Turkey. (As you know, all letters to and from the U. S. A. are dealt with by the censor; therefore the usual freedom of expression is somewhat limited.) * * * * I am primarily concerned to see the Unions putting in a claim, and backing it effectively, for some substantial measure of control in the workshops, as a practical step towards controlling the economic situation at the close of the war, and after.

When the workers appreciate the importance of actually controlling the conditions under which they work, and use the readiest and most effective means by which to do this, the trade unions will become the reconstructive agencies through which the workers will function as producers and consumers. The form the changes will take are likely to be changes in the working hours, regulated so that every one will have an opportunity of participating in useful work, and enjoying the results. I believe this to be worthy of systematic attention in your columns.

TOM MANN.

THE GREAT GAME

A. B.

Dramatis Personae:

I—Manufacturers and Capitalists.

You—The Workers.

Black Figure.

(Curtain rises.)

I: Go down into the bowels of the earth. Bring forth the coal and gold, the iron, silver and precious stones.

You: It is done.

I: Build factories, fashion tools and shape the world into joy and beauty.

You: It is done.

I: Good, my men. Glorious! What wealth, what riches are mine!

A Few Voices: Yours? Why, We created it all!

(Commotion on the stage.)

More Voices *(angrily)*: It's ours! *We* made it.

I: Silence! Didn't I *order* it done?

Voices: But it's ours. We made it.

I: Call in the Law!

(Enter Dark Figure, clad in Black, carrying Bible in one hand, naked sword in the other. Both hands mailed.)

(Solemn silence as the Law speaks.)

The Law: It is his. So it is decreed. The integrity of our just and free institutions must be maintained.

(All reverently kneel before the Dark Figure.)

Exit Law.

I *(proudly jubilant)*: It is mine, by Law.

You: We are poor. Our wives need food, our children are hungry.

I: I will give you the things you need—

You: Give us! Give us!

I: In return for more work. I will sell the things you make and I will give you wages for it.

You: Wages! Good Wages?

I: Yes, a fair wage.

You: Here, here! A fair wage!

I: I will give you food and clothing in return for your wages.

You: Kind, kind Master! Here, take our wages.

(I takes the wages and portions out the scanty food.)

(You, having devoured the food, stands empty-handed, with satisfied mien.)

I *(with deep self-satisfaction)*: Industry and thrift are the backbone of our great national prosperity.

You: But we have nothing left.

I: Elect me to office and I will pass a law to open free soup kitchens for those among you who are deserving of my bounty.

You: Hurrah! Hurrah! Our Candidate!

Torch-Light Procession. *Curtain falls slowly.*

LETTER BOX

A. C. For years the militants of this country have been lamenting the absence of a live revolutionary labor paper. It's here now. THE BLAST is at their service. There is no money back of this paper. It will be able to exist only with the co-operation of those who realize the great need of such a paper. It is therefore up to you and other good rebels to get on the job. Help spread THE BLAST. See to it that it gets into the unions of your city; get subscriptions; put it on the stands and cover the various meetings and lectures. Do it now.

SAM AND FRIENDS. The "Chain Gang" and other planned departments will materialize as soon as we can catch our breath. We, in the office here, are good union men, but just now we are working 18 hours every day, Sundays included. There's all kinds of editorial, managerial and clerical work to be done. Come and help.

"BILLY," Kansas City. We're waitin', waitin'. A word to the wise, you know.

S. L. The man who invented letter-writing was certainly a nuisance. Our days are too short for much personal correspondence. We'll speak through THE BLAST.

A. ROSENBERG, Phila. It is a fine thought on your part to make a house-to-house canvass for THE BLAST. Wish we had more like you in every city.

GROUP "VOLONTA" and OTHERS. Reports of meetings, lectures, etc., must be brief. Space in THE BLAST is very limited.

MEETINGS AND LECTURES

(Under this heading announcements will be made free of charge to Labor and Radical Organizations)

CURRENT EVENTS CLUB will meet every Friday, 8 P. M., **sharp**, at Averill Hall, 1256 Market Street near 9th. No lectures. Discussion of important events of the week. Everybody invited to the OPENING of the CLUB, Friday, February 4th. ALEXANDER BERKMAN will open the discussion.

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GRAND BEAN SOCIAL, given by Dr. Bayo, Woodmen's Hall, 3345 Seventeenth Street, Saturday, January 29th, 8 p. m. Admission, 10 cents.

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"VOLONTA," an anarchist propaganda group, will welcome visitors at its meeting place, 1602 Stockton Street, corner Union. Discussion in English and Italian, every Saturday evening.

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THE INTERNATIONAL RADICAL LIBRARY of Chicago holds lectures every Saturday evening, in its club rooms at 712 S. Loomis Street. Friday evenings, discussions. Admission free.

PROTEST MASS MEETING
in the case of **MARGARET SANGER**
On Trial in New York for Birth Control Propaganda
CARPENTERS' HALL, 112 VALENCIA STREET
SUNDAY, JANUARY 30TH, 3 P. M.
Auspices S. F. Birth Control League
Speakers From All Walks of Life — Admission Free